June 1, 1968

Dear Hal,

I returned a few days ago from my two-week visit to Los Angeles and will try to bring you up to date on what I have learned.

Before I get into that I want to point out something which you once requested of me concerning two individuals, one of them dealing in some way with Thornley. Their names are Deyahn Calixtas and Vic Latham. If you'll recall you mentioned these in your letter to me dated 4/5 and your letter to Paul dated 4/16.

I believe that Vic Latham(see your letter 4/5) is most likely the same person I wrote to you about of whom Dave Lifton once mentioned to me that he had seen Thornley's manuscript. When I saw Dave in L.A. this time he referred to what sounded like a "Victor Alachem" as the man who was shown Thornley's ms. According to Dave, this person is (or was) from LSU(Louisiana State University). My letter to you pointed out that Dave said he was a professor of English but I did not get to ask Dave if the "Alachem" he spoke of was in this department. It is my belief that this is the same Vic Latham you inquired about.

Another inquiry you directed at me concerned a person known as Deyahn Calixtas who was also known as Dion(e) turner and had other aliases. Refer to the letter I gave you a copy of from William R. Klein to Garrison (dated May 4, 1967). There is a name there of a Juan Calixto Garcia. Garcia was the grandson of the famous Garcia who received the famous message. It is believed he owned a plantataion in Cuba and for one reason or another left after the Cuban Revolution. He was a Tulane U. student and worked part-time in the school cafeteria. Now Klein says that Garcia was president of the "Free Voice of Latin America".(It was Klein who drew up the Articles of Incorporation and became its secretary-treasurer).

Could it be possible that Deyahn Calixtas was the daughter, wife or sister of Garcia.?With such an unusual name I should think this a possibility. It is also interesting to note that Clint Bolten wrote for the "Free Voice". As you'll recall Thornley devoted his book to Bolten.

Ed Butler was also connected with the "Free Voice" and he allegedly "induced" every member of the "Free Voice" to join INCA.

When I saw Dave he told me that Thornley admitted knowing Ed Butler which was rather strange for the tape I heard of Thornley when I was in L.A. the last time admitted of no such thing.

Undoubtedly, you are in a better situation to put all this into a better context based on your sources of information but I thought I would pass whatever I knew along. If the pieces fit, then fine.

Lifton mentioned two other people in New Orleans he knew of who knew Thornley. One was named Frazier who is a bartender and the other was a Roger Covin. I didn't recall why he mentioned these two but perhaps you may know why.

Bolten is now writing a column known as the "Bourbon Street Parade" for the Vieux Carre Courier, which is, I believe, published in New Orleans. The Nov. 10, 1967 issue has an open letter addressed to Thornley.

By the way, did you know that Billy Lovelady is now living in Claremont, California? Ask Fred Newcomb about it and he can tell you where he is now residing.

You also expressed interest in learning more about Kent Courtney. While in L.A. I came across the following articles on Courtney in the L.A. Times. I'll quote from them here:

L.A. Times - May 2, 1965
"ANTI-RED PARTY PLANNED BY CONSERVATIVE GROUP"

Plank Urges U.S. to Capture Red Chinese, Russians in Cuba, Hold Them as Hostages

Chicago(AP) - The Congress of Conservatives approved Saturday a declaratuon of its "intention to participate in the formation of a national anti-Communist party."

The three-day meeting also wound up with adoption of a program of action that, among other things, called for liberation of Cuba.

Members of the group cheered the reading of that plank and this elaboration of it:"We should capture Chinese and Russian Communists now based on Cuba and hold them as hostages pending release of Americans from Russia and Red China."

NEW PARTY

This had been designated as "New Party Day." The day didn't bring forth a new party but it did lay the groundwork for what the leaders hope may become one in the future.

"We offer the people the skeleton of a national organization," Bard Logan, San Antonio, Tex., a member of the committee which drafted the approved document, told a reporter.

"It will be a reality only after they organize state parties," he said.

The gathering was sponsored by the Independent American, a political action monthly newspaper published by Kent Courtney.

500 REGISTER

Courtney, who served as chairman of the sessions, said 500 persons had registered.

The participants voted to sit themselves up as an"advanced committee" to "encourage the formation of new state parties, support existing independent parties, seek the achievement of a national committee and encourage the appearance of potential candidates for the new national party's nomination."

The declaration said "final terms of organization will be set by a new national convention." But no time or place was set.

This is from the Los Angeles Times of May 9, 1965:

FEAR AND LAUGHTER: Ultra Right - A View Under Magnification

by Paul Gapp(Chicago Daily News)

(Note: Paul Gapp attended the recent rally of the Congress

of Conservatives which was held in the grand ballroom of the Sheraton-Chicago Hotel).

" ... The people came from 30 states, with heavy representation from the South and West. Their median age was in the late 40s, although there was a sprinkling of youths and octegenarians. There were many husbands and wives. There was one blind man who carried a placard promoting the third party proposal.

.....Kent Courtney, the New Orleans publisher, is an affable red-haired entrepeneur, a packager of conservative goods. He turned red when Utah Gov. Robert E. Smylie told newsmen in Boise that the Congress was a "money-raising campaign for Mr. Courtney."

Courtney said he must pass the hat once a year to break even. Perhaps the frequent business plugs he salted through the congress will help him ~~pay~~ stay afloat in 1965.

'FREEDOM FAIR'

The "freedom fair," a hotel exhibit hall filled with commercial right-wing sales booths, was Courtney's idea. On sale were conservative~~s~~ books, ~~xxxxxxxx~~ pamphlets, phonograph records, flags, lapel buttons, patriotic pictures and auto license~~s~~ plates that read "Impeach Earl Warren." American Opinion Bookstores, the John Birch Society's literary arm, had the biggest and most elaborate display. There are 300 such stores now, and 700 more plannned.

Edwin A. Walker, the former major general who was forced to quit the Army because of his right-wing indoctrination programs turned in the most spectacular performance at the meeting.

Walker began at a press conference where he spent half of the time castigating the press. (Other speakers repeated the "controlled news" theme, and some delegates buttonholed reporters, challenging them to "print the truth for once.")

Walker wandered, wavered, repeated himself, paused, adjourned the press session, reconvened it, tossed off a final string of run-on sentences, then graciously thanked the "Communist-controlled" reporters for coming.

Robert Welch, founder of the John Birch Society, was more concise. He said the entire nation is "one vast lunatic asylum."

Welch made several allusions to sexual subjects (a dance for homosexuals, interracial intimacy, sex stimulants, pornography). Ultra conservatives blame the Communists for all sexual activity that in their judgment is aberrant.

The Birch Society leader, however, is at bottom a colorless speaker, no matter how titillating his subject matter.

The man who really excited the crowd who variously tongue-whipped them into anger and adulation, who shouted into the microphone, who raised more downright hell than anyone else, was Lester Maddox. He id the former Atlanta restaurant operator who closed up shop rather than serve Negroes.

'MAN OF THE HOUR'

Maddox looks like a ribbon clerk, but ~~xxxxxx~~ when he opens his mouth he is an oratorical tiger. His prescription for the nation's political and social illnesses was shouted at the very end of his address: "What do we need? What do we really need? We need a George Wallace in the White House. He's the man of the hour."

While Maddox is the right wing's most respected hero, the man who appeared to emerge from the conference with the greatest power potential is not a shouter, nor is he equipped with anything approach-

ing the common touch.

He is Medford Evans, a serious, literate, deeply devoted disciple of all that is holy to the ultra-conservative cause.

Evans is a walking paradox. He is a Yale Ph.D. who lives in Jackson, Miss. He is a genuine intellectual in a movement that generally despises and often heaps ridicule on intellectuality. He has taught English and history in southern colleges.

A NEAT BALANCE

Evans' speech was not particularly well-attended. And Evans despite his other skills reads aloud very badly. It was obvious his audience was restless.

So it went, the Congress of Conservatives. There was fear, there were grim warnings. But there were also lusty rebel yells, band music, flag waving, laughter. A neat balance.

It can be reported that no Negroes were seen in the grand ballroom during the long round of speeches.

But, actually, there was one. He was a hotel employee who quietly slipped into the hall to correct an oversight. He placed an American Flag on the stage."

That is all I have on Courtney for the moment and if I come across more I'll let you know.

You also asked if I had any more information on Philp Geraci III. While I was in L.A. I learned that Clay Shaw had bailed out Geraci III and others after a police raid on a home where a party was being held. I presume that this was a homosexual party based on only my feeling. I do not know the date of the raid.

My trip to L.A. convinces me that he Universal Life Church (to which Beckham belonged) is extremely important in this whole affair, both in Dallas and New Orleans. It is my feeling that it served as a front for activities that directly or indirectly related to the assassination. I think it would be very worthwhile to get <u>any</u> information about this church and if you know of anyone who can look into this I think it should be a top priority consideration. There are some things I learned in L.A. which I don't wish to communicate by letter but will have to wait until I see you. You know of one already.

Mentioning my communicating with you in person brings up a thing I'll discuss now. I feel that the N.O. trial will not take place this summer. This being so, I am planning on coming back East to visit my parents (who live in N.J.) and also to see you. I'll probably leave by mid-June and stay for some time in the East unless. of course, the trial should get underway while I'm there. I don't count on this happening (the trial) so I should be there for the good part of the summer.

In my absence Bob Hyatt has agreed to handle the Citizens' Committee and the class I held, although we're thinking of ending the class since we pick up few new people who do research. The only real workers we have now are Paul Hoch, Bob Hyatt, Jim Schmitt, myself and perhaps, occasionally, one or two others who will help out when they are able to. The Whites in Mill Valley continue to be of tremendous help particularly with tapes which they always provide. They can't be thanked enough for what they have done. I'm sure you realize the help they've provided.

I'm also enclosing a check in the amount of $25.00, most of which I raised for you at one class session I had before I left for Los Angeles. This will be the money that was due you for the first trip you made to San Francisco in 1966. I realize that we still owe you more but we will raise the additional amount and make a final payment just as soon as we can. I hope you'll bear with me. If I could I would pay the balance but at the moment I have been not working for two months, devoting a good deal of my time to the case.

If you can can you enclose me the second (and any other) page of a copy of a letter you sent me which Gary Murr wrote. It was addressed to you and dated April 18th. I've written to Murr and told him who to contact on Similas (I gave him two names). He did not have a copy of this letter and suggested I write you. I'd like to have it so that I can make suggestions for his book.

Before I forget there is a name that Jim Schmitt pointed out to me that may refer to Thornley in CD75. Jim says that page 332 of that document refers to a Sylvia Bartin just following Thornley and he is getting a copy of this to see what it contains. He'll let you know if it is related.

I don't know how helpful this will be, but there is a couple living in San Francisco who once lived in New Orleans. The husband went to see Garrison to see if he could be of any help(They came form S.F., on a vacation). Garrison told the husband to look me up and we met recently.

The wife told me that she knew a Bill Warden who rented office space at the Trade Mart in New Orleans and that a John Hunley was his assistant. These two could provide valuable information if they could be contacted (presuming they're willing to talk about what they know). She also mentioned a beauty salon on St. Charles Ave. which had a white front and doorman. She couldn't recall the name of the salon but did recall the hairdresser there since she went there quite often when she lived in N.O. His name was Edwin Davis and was known as "Mr. Dee". Davis once told her that the owner of this beauty salon was one of Shaw's lovers and that the owner still had dinners with Shaw.

A name I came across in L.A. is also mentioned in CD75 with respect to Ferrie. The name is Radelat and occurs on page 295 & 341. Do you know who this is? I can tie him in with information I learned in L.A.

Do you know anything about a "Laymen's Commission of The American Council of Christian Churches", P.O. Box 8775, Pittsburgh, Pa. 15221? Bradley belongs (or belonged) to it. Others who served on this "Commission" were: George F. Kurtz, Pittsburgh, Pa.(Chairman); Max McCall, Indiana, Pa.; Lorin Oxley, Pella, Iowa; Dr. George Hess, Bunkerhill, Illinois; John Stormer, Florissant, Missouri and Robert F. Kurtz, who was general secretary. Of these names only John Stormer rings a bell but I can't recall where I've seen his name.

A source I learned of in L.A. claims to know quite a lot about Ferrie. He says Ferrie once participated in a munitions raid near Golden Eagle, Louisina. Ferrie and others flew in a

helicopter owned by Steven Romero from Gretna, La. He claims they "stole" the munitions from Sergio Arcacha Smith and that these munitions ended up into the hands of Richard Lauchli. I cannot vouch for his accuracy but he does figure in this case. Garrison has so indicated, after I learned of him.

This same source, incidentally, claims Courtney gave money to Sergio Arcacha's "Crusade to Free Cuba" and also to the Minutemen. He xxxx claimed a "Bernie" had been a member of the "Crusade to Free Cuba", also. Bernie was described as a "tall, French-looking man who was dark complected like a Cajun." This matches Shaw's description almost to a tee.

I would like to mention more in this letter about some other individuals but this will have to wait until I see you. There's much to discuss with you that simply cannot be put in a letter.

So, I'll close for now and write you when I hear from you again.

Regards to your wife, and best to you also.

Best,

Hal Verb

Hal Verb

P.S. Lifton seems determined to go ahead with the Thornley bit. He's forming (believe it or not) a "Fair Play for Thornley" Committee and, I understand, has an article in "Open City", an underground newspaper published in L.A. on Thornley. He promised me a copy and I'll send it into you when I get mine. It's dated May 29th, I believe, if you write Steve Burton for a copy.

Also enclosed is an article I picked up while at UCLA.